

(19) World Intellectual Property  
Organization  
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date  
4 August 2005 (04.08.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 2005/070292 A1**

(51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: **A61B 5/15**

(21) International Application Number:  
PCT/AU2005/000063

(22) International Filing Date: 21 January 2005 (21.01.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:  
2004900310 23 January 2004 (23.01.2004) AU

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every  
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,  
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,  
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,  
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,  
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,  
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,  
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,  
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,  
ZW.

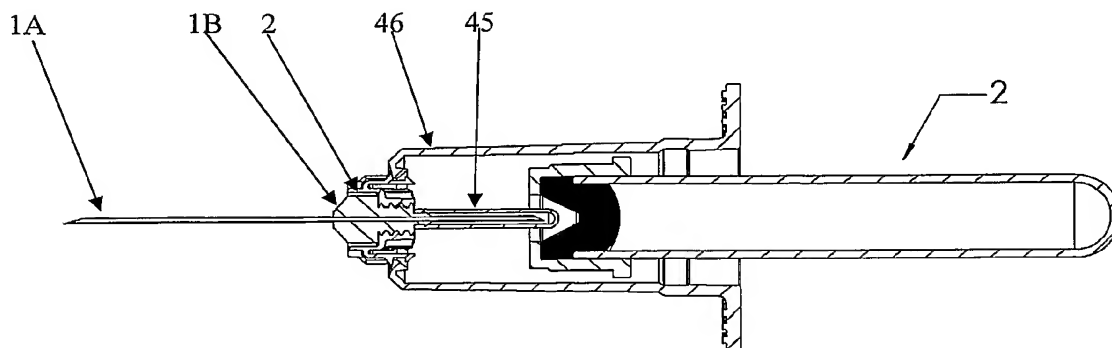
(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every  
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,  
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,  
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),  
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,  
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO,  
SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN,  
GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

**Published:**

- with international search report
- with amended claims

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guid-  
ance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the begin-  
ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: IMPROVEMENTS TO A BLOOD COLLECTION DEVICE



(57) **Abstract:** A blood collection device comprises an open ended syringe like housing (10) into which a vacutainer can be inserted. The front of the device contains a needle holder (11) and a double ended needle (12). The needle holder can be decoupled from the housing and retracted into the device but only after the vacutainer (13) has been removed and a separate needle retraction device (28) has been inserted into the open end of the housing and pushed against the inner end of the needle holder. The needle retraction device comprises a hollow body which is under vacuum and which has an open end closed by a piston (5). The piston functions to decouple the needle holder from the blood collection device and lock the needle holder and at the same time to be decoupled from the hollow body. The piston containing the needle holder and the attached contaminated needle is sucked back into the hollow body to render the needle safe.

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